Exposing the True Costs of War and Militarism Since 1985

VETERANS FOR PEACE

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SPRING 2014

VFP TAKES ON DRONES

Leah Bolger

Drones are unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and are one of the areas of emphasis identified in the VFP Strategic Plan and so to better coordinate, support, and promote the anti-drone efforts by our membership and chapters, the VFP Drones Working Group has been reorganized and is meeting regularly.

One of the first orders of business is to create a position statement for the organization. VFP is not opposed to drones which might be used to survey forest fires or other similar missions, so we will not be issuing a blanket statement opposing all drones. However, missions such as those are often levied as a way to divert attention from the real harm being done by other types of drones. Veterans For Peace is adamantly opposed to weaponized drones, which we know are being used by our government in violation of international law to kill thousands of innocent people. Not only is their use immoral, but also counterproductive in that our nation has created exponentially more enemies through the use of weaponized drones than we have killed using drones. We are also gravely concerned by the very real damage to civil rights that surveillance drones portend. And thirdly, the complete opacity of the Obama administration's policies regarding all types of drones is absolutely unacceptable.



American citizens have every reason to be alarmed by what we do know about Obama's drone policies. We know that the NSA has been illegally collecting massive amounts information without our knowledge or approval. We know that police and law enforcement personnel are procuring drones, and their use will undoubtedly further erode our First and Fourth Amendment rights. We know that the U.S. military is rapidly increasing its production and procurement of drones and expanding its drone facilities, not only globally, but also through the conversion of Air National Guard bases to drone control centers. In late 2013, six sites were identified as locations for federal programs in drone research, development, test and evaluation: University of Alaska (with sites in Washington and Hawaii), the state of Nevada, New York's Griffiss International Airport, North Dakota Department of Commerce, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi.

One of the most important functions of the WG is to network with other anti-drone organizations to

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President's Report

Patrick McCann



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Veterans and Winter Soldiers,

We held our quarterly VFP national board meeting last month in Newark, NJ, and elected our new Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer). It's a new Executive Committee (ExCom); I'm the only hold-over. Gerry Condon is now Vice-President, Mark Foreman is Treasurer, and John Heuer is Secretary. Michael McPhearson, as Interim Executive Director, is also on the ExCom.

We welcome new board members Willie Hager (Jacksonville), Tom Palumbo (Asheville), and Joey King (Nashville). Gerry Condon (Seattle) and Barry Ladendorf (San Diego) return. We are glad to have their energy.

We also want to applaud and acknowledge the efforts of our outgoing Vice-President (Matt Southworth), Treasurer (Mike Hearington), and Secretary (Adrienne Kinne).

Michael and I were in Tacoma, WA for a February 8th all-day VFP NW regional meeting, attended by 50+ VFP members. It was a wonderful day-long conference, and Michael and I were well-received by attendees. We shared with folks, and wish now to share with you.

Our current tasks and projects include preparing our 2014 (Asheville, NC) and 2015 (San Diego) conventions. Start looking on the website for information about this year's convention (July 23 – 27). We've had a fair amount of dialogue developing VFP's strategic plan, particularly how to connect the wars abroad to the war at home. We add this new focus to our work opposing drones, defending resisters, stopping new wars/ending old ones, educating the American people as to the 'cost of war', and closing the detention center at Guantanamo Bay. New initiatives for 2014 include commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 'Christmas Truce', and opposing the Obama administration's 13-year, $65 million proposal to whitewash the Vietnam War.

We never had a lack of issues, and our activism is a strength of both our national board and our membership. Current board culture is good; we are conscious of the need for people to enjoy working together, at the national and chapter levels. Our finances are stable, but we look to begin a membership drive soon, and pay more attention to our development needs, vis-à-vis funding. We have been discussing developing regions; 2014 will see a greater attention to the West Coast as we wrap up a 3-year period of attention to the Southeast (Miami, Columbus, Asheville, Raleigh).

We are challenged by the many tasks at hand, particularly paying attention to ongoing organizational needs. There is too much for our 13 board members and Executive Director to handle without your input. We need to pay more attention to strengthening our organization. We invite you, our members, to join a national committee (development, membership, communications, by-laws, etc.) or working group (the environment, Palestine/Israel, etc.). Help us build the convention; get your chapter to take out an ad in the handbook. Register to attend yourself. Considering presenting a workshop! It's time to build a movement internally to make us a lean, green, peace machine. Let's get it on!

NEWSLETTER STAFF

Chuck Rossi, Editor
Contributing Editors:
John Grant
Will Shapiro
Editor-At-Large:
W.D. Ehrhart

Executive Director's Report

Michael McPhearson



VFP Board, 2014

As Veterans For Peace moves into 2014 we must ask, how we can be more effective as an organization? How can we spread our message of peace and help people see that a world without war is possible? Many see our goal of abolishing war as "pie in the sky." But we know that humanity's only chance to survive our own follies is to abolish war.

This year VFP will manage our work and limited resources by emphasizing five areas of current immediate challenges; Drone Warfare, GI Resistance, Closing Guantanamo, Current and Future Wars, and the Military Budget - redirection of resources from war to human needs and peace building. We are working hard to standup our working groups in these areas, to develop specific policy outcomes, create educational materials and initiate actions to bring about the change we seek.

With the 100th anniversary of World War One, "the war to end wars," Veterans For Peace will work to make more widely known the incredible story of the Christmas Truce, when enemy troops set aside their weapons and recognized each other's humanity to enjoy each other's company for Christmas. Who better than veterans who work for peace to tell the story of these soldiers' celebration of peace in the midst of war? Our society needs to hear this story, that peace is possible even in the darkest hours.

To counter the Pentagon's $65 million 13 year effort, Veterans For Peace is working closely with Vietnam Veterans Against the War to kick off the *Full Disclosure: Toward an Honest Commemoration of the American War in Viet Nam* campaign. The campaign features efforts to educate the U.S. public through an antiwar narrative, including by accurately memorializing key events of the U.S. in Viet Nam, as well as antiwar resistance. We will also support and document ongoing work that seeks to undo some of the harm to Viet Nam perpetrated during the war.

The VFP strategic plan has two broad goals taken directly from our statement of purpose. The first is to: Turn public opinion against war by increasing public awareness of the full cost of war. Our greatest assets as veterans of the military working for peace are our veteran voices and our stories. VFP National will provide education opportunities, resources and materials to membership about the causes and human, economic, civil rights and liberties and environmental cost of war. We will create local and national opportunities for members to talk to media, students, civic groups, legislators and the general public about the cost and who benefits from war. This will strengthen all of the work of Veterans For Peace by injecting pro-peace veterans' voices into the public discussion and increasing the number of veterans and service members speaking out to change U.S. foreign policy from war to cooperation and diplomacy.

The second goal goes hand in hand with the first: To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations. We will move forward this goal by building off the first - using our voice and knowledge as veterans - but also by working with community organizations to expose the connections between the war at home and the wars abroad and address domestic and international peacebuilding needs. The idea is to empower communities to support alternatives to war and militarism by helping to build a domestic culture of peace and justice. This will help give communities space to examine how conflicts thousands of miles away impact us in the U.S. and provide examples of how peaceful conflict resolution can work in the streets and between nations.

Interesting, I recently found two quotes from vastly different men that sum up the obstacle we must overcome when engaging with domestic allies to work for world peace;

"Peace at home is peace in the country. Peace in the country is peace in the world."
– Mustafa Kamal Ataturk.

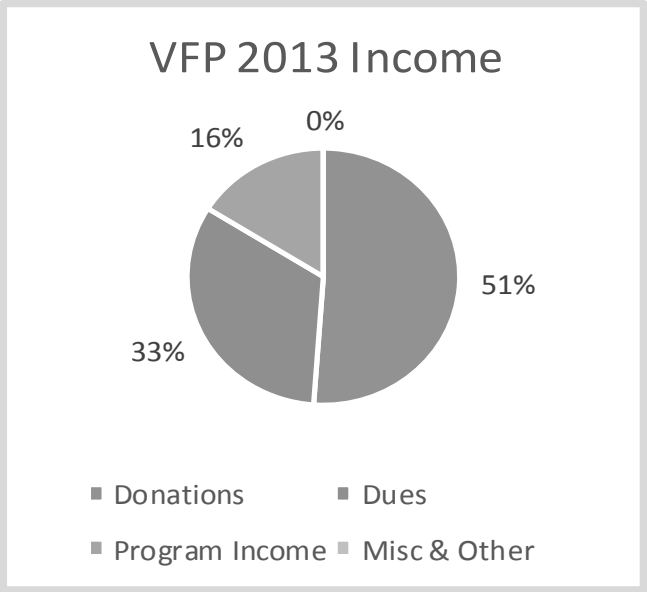
"Before we find world peace, we gotta find peace in the war in the streets."

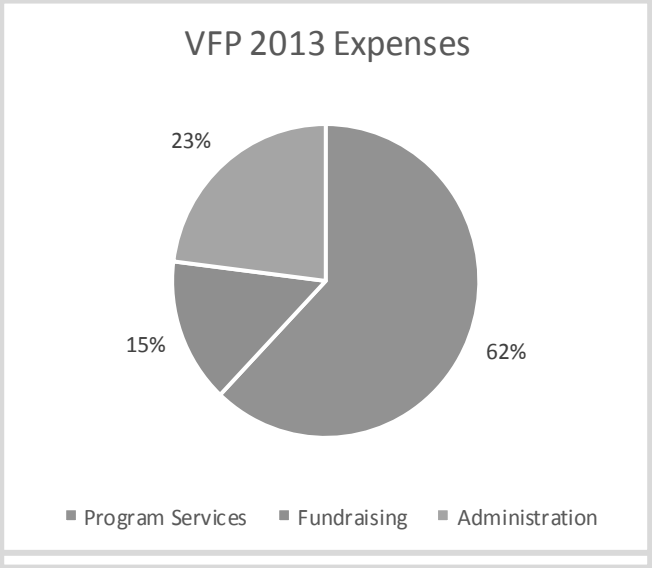
– Tupac Shakur

Perhaps these men in a few words have laid out a basic blueprint for success in building a real peace movement, joined by millions, not because they are anti-war, anti- Republican, or anti-capitalist. But because they are for peace and have found a vision of peace they see alive in their personal lives. To build a road to peace we must walk a path of peace. Veterans For Peace is poised to take a leading role in efforts to help everyday people create peaceful communities and envision a peaceful world. I believe as we help communities create peace in the streets we will be well on our way to abolishing war.

See you in the streets and power to the peaceful!

VFP 2013 Annual Report





Income	%	$
Donations	51%	241,882.00
Dues	33%	154,941.00
Program Income	16%	76,108.00
Misc & Other	0%	1,492.00
Total		**474,423.00**
Expenses		
Program Services	62%	283,388.00
Fundraising	15%	68,105.00
Administration	23%	105,052.00
Total		**456,545.00**



Chapter 101 — South Bay, CA ringing bells for peace on Veterans/Armistice Day.

Once again, as we review a year in the life of Veterans For Peace we are first and foremost impressed and grateful for the commitment of our members and supporters. Your generous support of peace means that once again VFP managed to cover our expenses for the year with just a bit left over. One consequence is that staff and Board time spent on fundraising can be kept to a minimum and time spent working to end war at a maximum.

Another consequence of VFP's deeply grassroots nature is that most of our program work is carried out in chapters across the country on a volunteer basis and is not reflected in our expenses. That means our proportion of funds going to administration and fundraising looks higher than some other organizations.

2013 IN REVIEW

- As ever, VFP chapters sponsored hundreds of speaking events, rallies marches and legislative visits; published dozens of articles and letters and touched thousands of lives.
- Throughout the year, VFP issued timely action alerts and statements at times of urgency on issues such as diplomacy with Iran, drone violence and military spending.
- In the Spring, VFP maintained a long-term public presence supporting Pvt. Manning at his trial in Fort Meade, MD.
- In the summer, members and chapters actively called for no military intervention in Syria and helped change the national conversation.
- Also over the summer, many members have fasted in support of prisoners at Guantanamo, along with education events, banners and published articles.
- Staff provided 11 training sessions to nearly 100 members on strengthening relationships and campaigns in chapters.
- In November, VFP provided leadership for celebrations of peace and returning November 11 to its original meaning as Armistice Day.
- In late November, VFP had its usual strong participation in the School of the Americas Watch demonstration at Fort Benning, GA.

Cuba Si, Yanqui No?

Vincent Stravino, M.D.

Recently I traveled to Cuba with a group organized by Jim Ryerson of the Los Angeles VFP chapter on a special license issued by the U.S. Treasury Department. Americans are otherwise subject to $7500 fine if they dare to be "tourists". Our government cites human rights abuses as the reason this blockade is still needed, while we overlook the well documented abuses of China, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and other trading partners.

We distributed school supplies in an elementary school, and were surrounded by children anxious to practice their English. At a senior center we were treated to a standing ovation and songs, handshakes from the men and an occasional kiss on the cheek from the ladies. All the Cubans we met were friendly but all adults, however, hated the American government's economic blockade and attempts to undermine the well-liked Castro government with CIA funded "dirty tricks" including the anti-Castro Miami radio station Radio Marti". If you think this is "commie propaganda", learn the facts from the disillusioned CIA field agent Phillip Agee who started the website www.cubalinda.com after repenting and writing *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*. Our organizer, Jim Ryerson, interviewed Phillip Agee previously during his production of several documentaries about the island nation. Recently, we read of efforts to free U.S. citizen and jailed government subcontractor Alan Gross in Cuba for smuggling illegal satellite internet equipment in 2009 in exchange for "the Cuban 5".The jailed Cubans, now only 4 in number, were arrested in 1998 for "conspiracy to commit espionage" after they attempted to infiltrate the Anti-Castro network in Miami. Although they never harmed persons or property, they were held in solitary confinement 17 months, and sentenced to double life terms similar to serial killers. Their trials and treatment have been criticized by the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, Amnesty International, and the U.S. National Lawyers Guild.

We saw that Cuba is a beautiful but poor nation with crumbling infrastructure especially along the Malecon, the beautiful oceanside drive in Havana where the high waves can splash into the street. A Cuban economist and professor at American University in Washington told us that the original model of communism was a Utopian ideal and never practical. Today, the preferred government is socialism where the State meets the basic needs of all Cubans while slowly promoting limited capitalism to encourage private enterprise but avoid oppressive income disparity. He estimated that the American economic blockade has cost a trillion dollars in lost trade to Cubans since it began under President Eisenhower in 1960. He acknowledged that Corporations and the wealthy lost money and property as in most revolutions, but the majority of citizens benefited.

Smaller farms we saw continue to work the land with oxen and horses. A positive result of Cuban farmers being unable to buy pesticides and fertilizer is the development of organic farming which is thriving. Tourism in Cuba is succeeding today even without Americans. Havana was crowded with European and Asian tourists traveling about in new Chinese buses. The only American vehicles we encountered were classic models of the fabulous 1950's serving today as taxis. Cubans are all in the same boat with the government providing good health care, education including college and beyond for qualified students, and housing subsidies. Wages are low and our young tour guide confessed that she desires more. All college graduates do public service to re-pay their free education. Few weapons exist outside of the small military, the police, and farmers. Computer access is poorly developed due to the economic blockade and the internet is limited to expensive slow dial-up at hotels, some schools and private homes. The Cubans point out that their Venezuelan neighbors provide the internet connection using an underwater cable. No American businesses, banks, or products of any kind were seen except cans of Coca-Cola made in Mexico.



Havana's Malecon.

As American veterans, we questioned Cuban war veterans who served in the people's revolt in Angola in 1980. All said that they were proud to serve they received good care on returning. Unlike our nation, Cubans were asked to assist by the populist rebel movement in Angola. Cubans were not involved in fighting or killing. Some were firemen and in damage control while another physician described his role attending the Cuban forces while doing public health service to the Angolan civilians. Some of these veterans also served in Central America including Haiti following natural disasters.

Every year the United Nations votes to end the economic boycott of Cuba. This year, again, Israel remained the only other country voting with the United States in the United Nations to continue this relic from the Cold War while all the other 188 member countries voted to end this punishment of Cuban society. I believe our current Cuban policy is based entirely on our government's financial and political interests in seeking to dominate the world in addition to catering to the aging but powerful Cuban lobby in Florida.

Obama Administration Resuming War Strategy Against Syria — and Iran

Faraz Azad



Aleppo, Syria

From the very beginning, it was clear that the United States' strategy of indirect intervention through supporting armed mercenaries in Syria is doomed to failure. Many experts believed, and continue to believe, that the overthrow of the Assad government would not be possible without direct military intervention by the United States and/or its NATO allies, and that Assad enjoys enough support both within and outside the country to be able to overcome the externally armed, fundamentalist mercenaries.

It seems that after several years of indirect intervention, the Obama Administration has now come to realize this fact and is moving toward a more direct military involvement. One thing that worries them is the possibility that Assad may win the next presidential election in Syria, this putting an end to the U.S. claim about the "illegitimacy" of Assad regime. Thus, Assad must be forced to step down, or overthrown, before the next presidential elections in Syria. And Obama Administration is moving in that direction.

This is a serious threat to peace in the Middle East. We as Veterans For Peace must focus all our efforts on stopping all foreign intervention in the internal affair of Syria and preventing another disastrous war.

This becomes even more important when we realize that Syria is just a stepping stone toward attacking Iran. Once Syria is subdued, Iran would become an easier target. The nuclear negotiations with Iran seem to be just a delaying tactic for the Obama Administration to buy enough time until Syria is taken care of. After that, we may expect to witness additional pressures and conditions imposed on Iran in order to guarantee the failure of the negotiations. Efforts to expand the sanctions against Iran have already started in the U.S. Congress.

We, as Veteran For Peace, along with the rest of the peace movement, have played an important role in opposing the warmongering policies of the Administration, defeating S. 1881, and raising people's awareness of the pending threat of another war. However, we need to go beyond this and put a practical solution before the people in order to mobilize them on a large scale.

This solution is the establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East. This solution calls for the removal and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction from all countries of the whole Middle East. This solution has been approved by the UN General Assembly and the NPT has called for the convening of a Conference in Helsinki, Finland, for this purpose in 2010. So far, the U.S. and Israel have been sabotaging the convening of the Helsinki Conference.

In support of this solution, a global conference was organized by the Israeli peace and anti-nuclear weapons activists on December 5-6, 2013 in Haifa, Israel. The Haifa Conference resolution calls for the removal of all nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East, and its global petition is demanding the convening of the much-delayed Helsinki Conference.

As Veterans For Peace, we must be at the forefront of this struggle. This is the only way that peace can be brought to the Middle East.

The Iran Working Group of the Veterans For Peace is now focusing its attention on this struggle. We call upon all of our comrades in VFP to lend a supporting hand to our efforts and be more active in this struggle.

To join the VFP Iran Working Group please go to: http://vfp-iwg.org and click on the Join button on top. We are holding monthly telephone conferences to discuss the issues related to the Middle East and nuclear weapons, and to develop our plan of action.

To read the Declaration of the Haifa Conference and sign its global petition, please go to: http://wmdfz.org/



On the Ground in Palestine

Edwin Krales

VFP Chapter 34 member interviews Alex Krales who last year spent 4 months working in Palestine with the International Women's Peace Service (IWPS) in the village Deir Istiya in the Salfit district, chosen by IWPS because of the number of illegal settlements there.

EK *Did you have any interactions of any sort with Jewish settlers, police or the army? How many were US born?*

AK While I was in the West Bank, there were Jewish settler attacks on the Palestinians weekly, if not daily. Settlers were usually easy to recognize because of their dress. They came in groups accompanied by the Israeli military. There were a few incidents when they were harder to recognize, such as on May 30th, when a group of 30 young settlers masked their faces with T-shirts and attacked homes bare-chested with stones and slingshots. After the attack, I watched them jog back to the illegal outpost and fall into a formation before loading into a truck with the efficiency that I associate only with military training. With the protection of the armed Israeli military using tear gas, the mob of settlers was able to inflict injuries with stones, damage homes and set fire to the land. On other days, I saw hate graffiti, destruction of olive trees and agricultural land, livestock harassed or stolen and many other atrocities. The Israeli army usually accompanies settlers during these attacks and helps them by tear-gassing Palestinians and their supporters who come to put out fires and defend families, homes or a village. The Israeli army serves as protection for the settlers by setting up checkpoints on the roads and not letting Palestinians or their supporters pass. They fire rubber-coated steel bullets and obscene amounts of tear gas to enforce their rule. There was often a tangible tension between the settlers and the Israeli military. I heard soldiers say things like "I don't want to be here" or "There is nothing we can do" when asked to remove settlers or prevent violent attacks in villages. Although there were exceptions, it was clearly observable that the settlers were more extremist than the soldiers. Border police were often present during interactions between Palestinians and settlers or during settler attacks and demonstrations, adding immediate deportation to my personal risk assessment.

Full article available at Counterpunch.org. Reprinted with permission.

PTSD Working Group

Dave Dittemore

PTSD and Military Sexual Trauma were addressed in one of the workshops at the National Convention last summer in Madison, WI. Dave Dittemore, Chair, has been also been a member of the Homeless Working Group. He is working on a comprehensive proposal that addresses treatment and housing in a rural environment. He argues against a warehouse solution that would probably end up in a troubled area of a major metropolitan area, with its attendant problems of drugs and crime. His draft proposal is in the PTSD Working Group area of the National VFP website.

(Continued from page 1)

strategize, plan and organize so that our collective action is most effective. WG members have been conferencing with several other organizations to plan for this year's April Days of Action. Additionally, we see the WG as the vehicle to better coordinate the actions of VFP members with each other as well as with other organizations. VFP Chapter 163 in Des Moines is working with the Des Moines Catholic Worker to plan a major event on March 15th to protest the conversion of the Air National Guard Base to drones.

In addition to developing a position statement on drones, the WG is also creating resource materials, including fact sheets, a PowerPoint presentation, maps of drone facilities, and many other items which will be available through the national VFP website.

An outstanding resource that is available to VFP members now is the latest film by Brave New Films director Robert Greenwald, entitled *Unmanned*. This is an outstanding documentary and is available for the asking. We encourage chapters to hold a film showing followed by a discussion. Please contact David Sladky (tanstl@hotmail.com) and a copy will be sent to you for free.

Also, if your chapter is planning an anti-drone action, please drop an e-mail to David Sladky and Casey Stinemetz (casey@veteransfor-peace.org) so that we can help promote it via both regular media and social media channels. Please, give us an after-action report so that we can let everyone know how it went. In the future, you can expect to see a lot more information coming out of the VFP Drones WG. Be sure to check out the weekly e-blasts and the national website for updates about actions being planned (including the Des Moines event and the April actions) status reports, and general news. Contact WG chair Leah Bolger if you would like to join the Drones Working Group. leahbolger@comcast.net

VFP Chapter Reports

Chapter 1 - Portland, ME

Richard Clement

In October, chapter members, along with the Maine Campaign to Bring our War $ Home, organized the *Maine Drone Peace Walk*. Led by Buddhist monks and nuns the walk started in northern Maine and nine days later arrived in Augusta where a large rally was held in the Hall of Flags in the Capital Building. Members talked of the deeply spiritual feeling of the walk. The walk received coverage in all the major papers in Maine as well as some excellent TV spots.

Also in October, member Regis Tremblay took his documentary *The Ghosts of Jeju* on the road for showings in California, Oregon, Washington and Minnesota. Regis presented this film at our last National Convention in Wisconsin.

In November a granite Peace Pole and bench were dedicated to Tom Sturtevant, our chapter namesake. A state representative, a founding member of VFP, community members and family all spoke eloquently about the life and achievements of Tom. The pole was fittingly placed at an elementary school in the middle of a vegetable garden that Tom was instrumental in starting and nurturing together with the children.

In December a number of chapter members attended a documentary on PTSD. The film was locally produced by public television and a law enforcement official who had been deployed to Iraq twice. Afterwards a panel discussion was held with the participants of the documentary. Chapter members took turns telling the panelists and audience their personal stories of PTSD and war trauma.

Chapter 9 - Boston, MA

Pat Scanlon



Ch. 9 parades on Veterans/Armistice Day.

We lost a beloved member of our chapter in December: Dick Smith – Presente!

The Smedleys had a successful Armistice/Veterans Day Parade at Sam Adams Park. Due to the restrictions placed on us by the American Legion, we followed the AL's parade by a few hundred yards. Our "outhouse" house band, The Leftist Marching Band, alerted all that Veterans For Peace were coming. Our resident videographer Jesse Perrier filmed the parade; here is the link www.youtube. com/watch?v=b4hxSNzElRU

Join us for the Saint Patrick Peace Parade on March 16, 2014. Our parade has been endorsed by VFP's Board of Directors, so come to Boston to march with us, Patrick McCann, and other Board members. This is our fourth year of struggle on the streets of South Boston . Our first year (2011) we had 500 marchers, one band, one duck boat, and one trolley, Last year (2013) we had 2,500 marchers, six bands, Bread and Puppet Theatre, one duck boat, two trolleys, and a couple small floats.

This year we will win this struggle along with our LGBT brothers and sisters allowing Veterans For Peace, LGBT groups, Peace Groups among others will walk either as part of the traditional parade or right behind with our whole parade. We have promises from our new mayor that "things will change". Approximately 800,000 people view the first parade and this year all of them will see us as well.

Chapter 10 - Albany, NY

John Amidon

The Chapter held its annual awards dinner last October which was a great success. We have participated in numerous demonstrations concerning gun violence, Iran, anti-drone work, nuclear disarmament, and anti-fracking.

Chapter President John Amidon is a member of the Hancock 31 and will be on trial soon for protesting drones in Syracuse. While we are active and supportive in many community events, our chapter is in need of some young active veteran members.

Chapter 21 - Northern NJ

Walt Nygard

With our first change in leadership in six years, Chapter 21 begins the new year with Michael Kramer elected President and Geoffrey Ithen Vice President. Michael, an Israeli Army combat veteran, was recruited into VFP by Dave Cline. An enthusiastic activist, Michael has participated in many a march, vigil, speaking event, the '07 Winter Soldier hearings, and international travel on behalf of peace and social justice causes.

Geoff Ithen, Vietnam era US Army vet, is the son of a WWII combat Marine and married to Wendy

Fisher, daughter of Harry Fisher, veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. They have been a solid and reassuring presence in our ranks.

Former President Dalton was elected to the VFP Board in 2013. He continues to work within the chapter and will no doubt be a level -headed asset to the Board. He follows Dave Cline and Michael McPhearson, from our Chapter, to serve nationally.

Walt Nygard remains active in the Chapter and working with Combat Paper NJ. Along with Jan Barry, Jim Fallon and Frank Wagner of Chapter 21, Combat Paper NJ has produced paper and art, gallery shows and poetry readings throughout the East.

We closed the year with our annual Holiday Party Fundraiser. Nancy Nygard and Peggy Fallon once again put together a great party. With good Christmas rock'n'roll by the Tomatoes and excellent food from the Classic Quiche Cafe, the Chapter generated enough holiday dough to present Susan Schnall of the Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign with $600.

Chapter 26 - Chicago, Il

Arny Stieber

Chapter 26 has been very busy. Our main focus is to gain support for the de-militarization of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) - the most militarized public school system in the nation - 9,000 children learning that violence is the solution. We've developed a petition to the Mayor (who controls the school board) and a Facebook page to gain support - DeMiltarize CPS. We've updated our web site - ChicagoVFP.org - to match our initiative.

In addition we're heavily involved in outreach to non-traditional organizations - like the University of Chicago and the Chicago Teachers Union. We attend seminars wearing our VFP shirts, hats, etc. We're getting noticed. We attend every CPS Board meeting (which are well covered by the media) and speak at most. CPS want to change Ames Middle School into a military school, and we're supporting the courageous parents who voted 87% to keep the military out.

We'll be involved in the Chicago Peace Film Festival in March and we have a spring music concert planned with Tom Neilson as the headliner.

Chapter 27 - Minneapolis, MN

David Logsdon

A strategy session to map out goals and actions for the new year was held on the first Sunday of January. We discussed how we need to get younger and more diverse and, more importantly, how to do it.

On Martin Luther King Day an event was held at an east metro church centered around his "Beyond Vietnam Speech". Four VFPers took turns reading the speech. Of course, as is our tradition, bells were rung 11 times.

In February our group participated in a 28 hour concert called "Drone not Drones" at a theatre down the block from our office. The band "Low" out of Duluth came up with the concert idea and we jumped in with both feet! Along with WAMM, the Anti-War Committee, and other peace cohorts we planned a march/street theatre action outside the music concert. We also tabled and volunteered inside the venue.

Our education committee is working hard at getting speaking engagements in classrooms from middle schools to universities. Outgoing Chapter President Larry Johnson will head up this committee.

Chapter 34 - New York, NY

Bob Keilbach



New York City Armistice Day/Veterans Day Parade

Chapter 34 participated in numerous anti-Drone Warfare actions, demos, educational events, and counter-recruitment. We marked the International Day of Peace, and the 12th Anniversary of Invasion & Occupation of Afghanistan. We conduct a weekly Peace Vigil, handing out literature regarding the War Economy, Iran, and other issues.

Over 60 joined our Peace Contingent in the NYC Armistice/Veterans Day Parade, including NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried. Some members also met at Union Square Park at 11am to ring bells for Peace, and distribute counter-recruitment flyers.

Recent events: Holiday Party where 60 attendees heard Kathy Kelly, Cathy Breen and VFP National Board member Tarak Kauff; a presentation regarding the Christmas Truce of 1914; screenings of the Ross Caputi film *Fear Not the Path of Truth*", and Regis Tremblay's *Ghosts of Jeju Island*".

In February, we held a forum regarding involvement of Veterans in progressive change movements.

Chapter 41 - Cape Cod, MA

Duke Ellis

The Cpl. Jeffrey M. Lucey Chapter has begun work on our 19th annual peace poetry contest, this year renamed the "Voices for Peace Poetry Contest." Emails and mailings were sent to every school (K thru 12)

on Cape Cod with special attention to the teachers who make peace poetry a part of their lesson plans.

Again, we received a grant from the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod to help fund the contest. We also received a generous donation from the Lucey family in support of this event. With their gift they noted that this year is the 10th anniversary of Jeffrey's death due to PTSD.

In October, the chapter received a generous donation from the Cape Cod Resource Center for Peace and Justice especially citing the poetry contest "which has inspired so many young students to take a stand against war."

The chapter marched in the Cape's largest Veterans Day memorial parade wearing armbands bearing the number "22" to represent the number of veterans and active duty military who commit suicide every day. This action resulted in interviews and two extensive news articles in advance of the event, in addition to member Max Money's annual Veterans Day piece. Some veterans from the local NamVets organization accepted and wore our armbands as well. And for a time, the true cost of war was made visible.



VFP Cape Cod at Veterans Day Parade

CHAPTER 46 - MONTEREY, CA

Phil Butler

Chapter 46 marched in our annual Martin Luther King Day celebration in Seaside, California on January 20th. We had a beautiful, sunny day and the turnout was great. Lots of people, all ages, colors and sizes turned out for the parade and presentations at our Oldemeyer Center. Our chapter also had a table at the Center.

CHAPTER 54 - SANTA BARBARA, CA

Mary Johnston

Sunday, November 10th marked the tenth anniversary of the Veterans for Peace display called Arlington West, located at the foot of Stearns Wharf in Santa Barbara, CA. Special guest speakers included County Supervisor Janet Wolf , COL Ann Wright, Mayor Helene Schneider, Steven Sherrill, co-founder of Arlington West, Jane Bright, whose son was killed in the Iraq War, former Mayor Marty Blum, and others. We put 1,000 candles in red cups in front of each of the 1,000 white crosses at sundown. We read the names of the soldiers killed in the Iraq and Afghanistan invasions. The community helped with the set up and reading of the names throughout the day, as well as the lighting of the candles. The local media covered the event, and it was announced that this will be the last set-up of Arlington West until next April. During the next few months our chapter will be deciding the future of AW, whether it be to continue to set up the demonstration and/or to add other demonstrations/activities.

CHAPTER 55 - SANTA FE, NM

Ken Mayers

Ken Mayers, Chapter president, is scheduled to go to court along with other four other VFP veterans for civil resistance in October at the Vietnam Memorial in New York City. The group refused police orders at 10 pm on October 7, 2013 to stop reading names of U.S. soldiers who died in that war. He also took part in the VFP Team who went to the West Bank last Fall to express solidarity with Palestinian aspirations for a country of their own. On February 7, the chapter sponsored a presentation by *The Soldier and the Refusenik,* two Israelis who have become strong anti-occupation activists. The Santa Fe Chapter thanked the Santa Fe New Mexican daily newspaper for continuing to regularly publish reports on US military killed in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Guest Jessica Gelay of the Drug Policy Alliance spoke in favor of veterans' access to medical marijuana for PTSD and other wounds of war.

CHAPTER 62 - SOUTHERN NH

Will Thomas

Members of the A. J. Muste Chapter continue to host a weekly public access TV program called "Veterans Speak Out."

We participated in the Armistice Day parade in N.H.'s largest city – Manchester. During this "Veterans Day" parade, as the "dignitaries" stopped at 11 am, we halted and rang our peace bell 11 times to commemorate the Armistice. We also explained to the crowd the true meaning of Armistice Day and how Congress had passed legislation in 1938 that proclaimed that November 11th would be a day to promote peace throughout the world. The applause to our announcement was loud and enthusiastic.

We continue to go into Manchester's three public high schools to offer students alternative perspectives on the military. We set up tables where we provide materials concerning "Truth-in-Recruiting" as well as handouts about financial help concerning college.

Our chapter has sponsored a film series at the Manchester Unitarian Universalist Church addressing the Occupy Movement, the cost of war, and the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

We also sponsored Jeremy Scahill's film *Dirty Wars* at the state's largest library in Manches-

ter. Response was very good as many citizens' eyes were opened re: global outreach of America's "Kill Teams", the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC).

Currently, NH VFP is collaborating with the Manchester Unitarian Universalist church to stage a production of *Project Unspeakable*, which deals with the assassinations of JFK, Malcolm X, MLK, and Bobby Kennedy. It is based on James Douglass's book, *JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters.*

CHAPTER 67 - LONG BEACH, CA

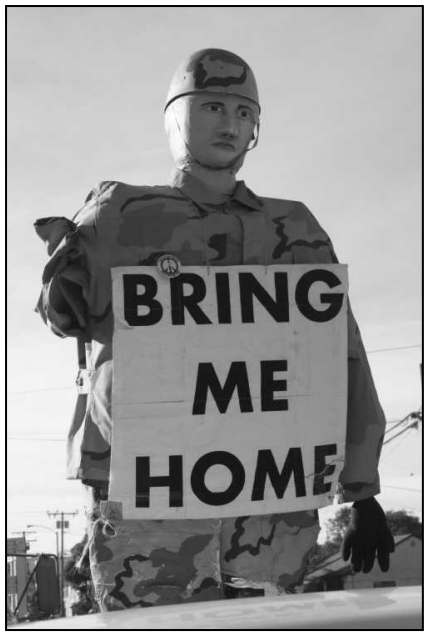
Horace Coleman

Along with peace activists from Long Beach, San Pedro and Orange County, CA—home of the John Birch Society and one of the nation's most conservative and GOP areas—the chapter marched in the 26th annual Martin Luther King Junior Peace & Unity Parade and Celebration.

Unlike previous years, no military recruiters were present in the MLK Park where the parade ended. Someone remembered that MLK was anti-war. A stripped down version of the chapter's Teen Memorial was erected in the park. Each cross bore a laminated photo and a brief description about one of the more than 400 teenage troops who have died in the Global War on Terrorism.

The Teen Memorial has also been displayed at an inner city high school to good effect. Most of the school's students had no idea that people their age had been killed in our current wars. The display quickly pierced the ignorance. So did the tabling that was done.

Chapter members participated at a standown for homeless vets held at an Army Reserve Center and spoke to classes at a high school in Hollywood and a history class at Whittier College (Richard Nixon's alma mater).



Oscar, the paper mache statue of a double amputee

CHAPTER 71 - SONOMA COUNTY, CA

Bill Simon

Our primary efforts have been focused on the logistics of hosting the Northern California VFP Conference, which will take place May 2nd, 3rd, & 4th at Mountain Home Ranch located just outside of Calistoga, CA. We have assembled inspiring speakers: Col Ann Wright, Phillip Butler, POW of the American war in Vietnam and author and Professor Peter Phillips, Media Freedom Foundation president and author.

The conference theme this year is *Developing a United VFP Northern California Voice*. Sunday morning we will be focused on establishing a process and project(s) for Northern California VFP Chapters to address as a unified collaborative VFP effort. To make a reservations Google, "Mountain Home Ranch, Calistoga."

In addition, we participated in the Sonoma County Annual Martin Luther King event. Frank Parish recited a passionate rendition of the 1967 MLK anti-war speech, which was well received.

And last but not least, we have a tech-savvy member, Jason Murphy, upgrading our Chapter website: veteransforpeacesonoma.net

CHAPTER 72 - PORTLAND, OF

Marion Ward

The Chapter held its annual Armistice Commemoration in downtown Portland with speakers and music by David Rovics. On November 22nd, VFP72 sponsored a standing-room-only crowd for *Project Unspeakable*, a scripted reading based on the JFK book by Jim Douglass. A great deal of interest was generated and future readings are being scheduled. In early November, the Chapter hosted Elliott Adams, former VFP national president, for a workshop and presentation on the Movement Action Plan.

Mike Hastie was a part of the VFP action at the Vietnam memorial in New York City again this year and participated in the VFP delegation to the West Bank in late November . Dan Shea continues his monthly TV program featuring veterans. Chris Knight is working with the Portland Metro chapter of *Soldier Songs and Voices*, providing free music lessons and songwriting workshops to veterans of all eras.

A large contingent of Chapter members attended the February regional VFP conference in Tacoma.

CHAPTER 75 - PHOENIX, AZ

Richard Smith

Honoring Arizona's Veterans (HAV), a right-wing 501 (c) corporation, has been trying to ban the Winter Soldier Chapter (WSC) from the Phoenix Veterans Day Parade since 2011. On November 11, 2013, it finally succeeded with the help of a Supreme Court decision (*Hurley v. Irish-Am. Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Group of Boston*, 515 U.S. 557, 566 (1995)) and the City of Phoenix (City). As a result, WSC members were forced to watch the Parade with the general public.

As disappointed as our members were (and still are), we may

still have the last laugh. We are currently exploring a lawsuit against the City and Mayor Greg Stanton in the Federal District Court. In the meantime, we plan to picket the Phoenix VA Hospital (VA). We decided to pursue this action because the VA was responsible for bringing HAV, and its right-wing ideologues, into the Parade in 2011. In addition, we continue to explore all other options to ensure our participation in the 2014 Parade and beyond.

Finally, don't think that what happened to us cannot happen to you. I have no doubt that, as I write this, there are right-wing groups across the country, who, cognizant of the *Hurley* decision, are busy making plans with your city officials to exclude you from your Veterans Day parade in 2014.

CHAPTER 71 - SAN DIEGO, CA

Gil Field

This past quarter has been another active one for the San Diego Veterans For Peace. Veterans Day found the chapter setting up our Hometown Arlington West Memorial in front of the USS Midway Museum, recognizing the nearly 300 fallen to date in Iraq and Afghanistan from our four southern California counties. Later, we walked in the popular San Diego Veterans Day Parade, and were extremely well received by the 30,000 spectators. January 19th found us walking in the San Diego Martin Luther King Day Parade, where we were again received very warmly.

Ongoing events during the quarter included our nationally recognized "No-Drone" activities, which helped keep Federal test drones out of our local skies, our planning for the 2015 VFP convention to be held here, and outreach work providing homeless veterans and others in San Diego with sleeping bag sets. We also worked with the JW Flooring Company to give out hundreds of backpacks full of personal essentials, and delivered hundreds of pairs of wonderful shoes donated by two local REI outfitters to the local Veterans Shelter here. We are very proud to have now given out over 2000 sleeping bag sets on the streets downtown late at night, and continue to do so year-round.

CHAPTER 99 - ASHEVILLE, NC

Ron Harayda

Members of our WNC Chapter here in the Smokies are joining with Chapter 157 in the Raleigh-Pitts-boro area of North Carolina for the HJonK gathering on Feb. 8 in the State Capital.

As the 2014 International Veterans For Peace Annual Convention approaches (23 - 27 July) we here are getting more excited and active with the planning. We are working closely with VFP 157 here in North Carolina, as well as receiving assistance from Nashville VFP 89 and Knoxville VFP 166 in Tennessee. Watch for announcements pertaining to the 2014 Convention on the veteransforpeace.org site.

CHAPTER 100 - JUNEAU, AK

Mark Miller

I'm writing to submit the following report and photo of a project we did to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 20.

On a hillside overlooking Lemon Creek an artist sculpted a Peace Sign from trees and shrubs blanketing the slope. It is a prominent focal point in our community and seems to float above the ancient glacial valley. In celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Veterans For Peace, Chapter 100, organized volunteers to illuminate the popular symbol of peace with luminaries, flashlights, and head lamps. With the assembly in place, we shouted, "We have a dream of Peace! We have a dream of Peace! We have a dream of Peace!"

Words from Martin Luther King Jr. were particularly appropriate for the event: "Darkness cannot drive out Darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. "



Living peace sign in Juneau, AK.

We extend a special thanks to our photographer, Kerry Howard. This photo and caption appeared on the front page of our local newspaper, the *Juneau Empire.* It is distributed state wide as Alaska's Capital City newspaper. I was particularly impressed with an elderly woman who made her way up the snowy trail, depending heavily on her walking cane for support. For the last 15 feet, she had to traverse a ditch and climb a steep slope. Determined to have her light in the event, she started to crawl on her hands and knees before she accepted help. She is the bottom person in the circle.

CHAPTER 102 - MILWAUKEE, WI

Paul Moriarity

Chapter 102 commemorated Armistice Day 2013 with a presence outside of the Milwaukee City Hall on a cold and snowy morning. Five of our chapter members braved the arduous climb up to the City Hall bell and manually rang it 11 times at 11am. A photo of the bell ringing was printed in the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* the following day.

The Mayor of Milwaukee, Tom Barrett, presented members of the chapter with an official Proclamation stating that, "The City of Milwaukee joins Veterans for Peace and community members in commemorating Armistice Day" and that Monday, November 11, 2013 be proclaimed as Armistice Day throughout the City of Milwaukee."

An amazing group of Milwaukee area chefs in a group called Food for Thought threw a benefit for our chapter at the Milwaukee Art Museum that Armistice Day evening. Sixty-Five people were in attendance for a six-course gourmet meal. Paul Moriarity spoke on the costs of war and the work of the chapter .

Our first event of the year is an author talk in collaboration with a local bookstore featuring Jennifer Percy, the author of *Demon Camp: A Soldier's Exorcism*, and Dr. John Liebert, the author of *Wounded Minds: Understanding and Solving the Growing Menace of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* on Friday, January 24th.

Like us at faceboo.com /MilwaukeeVetsforPeace

CHAPTER 104 - EVANSVILLE, IN

Lynn Kinkade

Chapter president Gary May served on a discussion panel after a screening of the film, *The People Speak,* on October 28 at the University of Evansville, commenting on the film's highlighting of veterans' issues. The film was part of a wave of screenings and readings in reaction to former Indiana governor Mitch Daniels' reported efforts to suppress Howard Zinn's book *The People's History of the United States*.

On Armistice Day, our chapter read the names of those members of the military killed in action in Afghanistan. In an indication of growing public sentiment against involvement in foreign wars as public policy, we were joined by the largest number of people at this event, now in its 11th year. Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke helped read the names in his official mayoral capacity.

Dave Helfrich, long-time treasurer of our local chapter and volunteer in many capacities who is stepping down from that position, was honored at the holiday meeting for his many years of service. Dave will continue to be an active member. Thanks, Dave, for your commitment to Veterans For Peace!

CHAPTER 105 - BALTIMORE, MD

Jim Baldridge

Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter 105 leader Ellen Barfield was on the VFP delegation that visited and acted with nonviolent activists in resistance villages in Palestine, as well as conferring with other activists and winding up with a demo at the US Embassy in Tel Aviv calling for an end to the occupation and US military aid to Israel. VFP was joined by former members of Combatants for Peace (CFP), Palestinian and Israeli ex-combatants who join forces and non-violently work to end the cycle of violence.

For the 11th year the chapter were an official contingent in the 14th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parade in Baltimore. As always, we had enthusiastic support from spectators and marchers in the parade. Spectators instantly saw the connection between MLK and Peace.

We are an endorser, along with other groups, of a bill to form a "Futures Commission", being introduced in the 2014 Maryland General Assembly. "A Futures Commission is a first step towards creating a framework for an economic conversion that would enable us to sustain our competitive edge and continue to pursue opportunities to bring money and JOBS to the state as part of a comprehensive economic strategy."

CHAPTER 106- NORTH TEXAS

Leslie Harris

Chapter members have organized or co-sponsored numerous events including two marches, a CIA career fair protest, Rovics concert, and a Close Guantanamo demonstration. Thanks to Dave Jensen and Grant Youngman, we had a "float" this year for the Dallas Veterans Day Parade.



Protest at the George W. Bush house

We've been busy with *The Lantern Project,* an ongoing effort to provide solar lanterns for Syrian women and girls in refugee camps via the international human rights organization, MADRE. We've tabled for and spoken about the project at churches and festivals and at an event we co-sponsored at SMU. Our efforts have provided 150 solar lanterns! If your chapter is interested in participating in the project, please contact us at jharris866@aol.com.

We've partnered with the North Texas Light Brigade to demonstrate almost weekly, spelling out or projecting: Don't Bomb Syria; Arrest Bush; Stop TPP; No Tar Sands; Water Is Life - Don't Frack Texas; Stop Monsanto; Shine A Light On Syrian Refugees; Get $$ Out of Politics; Fix Fukushima; End Executions; Pardon Chelsea; Stop NSA Spying; Torture Is A Crime; Close Guantanamo; No NDAA and more. Gary Egelston wrangles the light projector and Mandalay and Robert Trudeau bring the letters. Also. member Carol Ezell was among those arrested at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in NY while reading the names of war dead.

Regular monthly dinner meetings are preceded or followed by direct action, often in front of the George W. Bush Library or outside Bush's gated neighborhood. Most fun event this year: trick-or-treating in Bush's neighborhood…in Bush bobble heads.

CHAPTER 112 - VENTURA, CA

Michael Cervantes

Chapter 112 continues to have variety in contacts within our community, tabling at the Oxnard Multicultural Fair downtown, a Veteran's Day event at Oxnard College, plus booth-spaces at several local Native American Pow-Wows. The chapter participated in a presentation by Dr. Judith Broder of Soldiers Project sponsored by Citizens for Peaceful Resolutions. Her presentation focused on the trials of returning vets from both the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns.

One major event for this period revolved around Elliott Adams generous presentations on Movement Action Plan (MAP) and the closing of Gitmo

Our truth in recruiting in high schools continues weekly and this time around we were able to put an opt-out ad in one of the student newspapers.

An excellent Christmas time fundraising event brought in some donations to assist our high school Senior Scholarship Program. A generous donation from Chapter 7, Los Angeles, also helped with the scholarship fund. A big thank you to our neighbor chapter.

CHAPTER 115 - RED WING, MN

Emma Onawa

Chapter 115 is preparing busily for Peacestock 2014 on July 12th.

This year the chapter are working jointly with Chapter 27 Minneapolis/St. Paul). In addition, Peacestock will be moved from Wind-beam farm in Wisconsin to Colvill Park in Red Wing, which will include air conditioning. We will miss the beauty and natural outside setting at Wind-beam, but not the heat.

The chapter continues its efforts to get the Red Wing City Council to pass the Minnesota Spending Alternatives Project (for more info go to mnasap.org) Past attempts have been unsuccessful, so the chapter is considering alternatives, one of which is a door-to-door petition drive.

On January 4th, the chapter presented the movie *Joyeux Noël* to the public. *Joyeux Noel* is a 2005 French film about the World War I Christmas truce of December 1914, depicted through the eyes of French, Scottish, and German soldiers. It was written and directed by Christian Carion.

CHAPTER 118—SALT LAKE CITY, UT

Aaron Davis



February 21, a special operations team comprised of VFP/VVAW activists, made an incursion into the most conservative county in the reddest state in the union. Chapter member Rick Miller, VVAW member William Cobb, along with Vietnam vet Lewis Downey, presented a panel for 2 hours to high school history students of the Walden Private school in Provo, Utah.

Walden school history teacher Eric Beecroft said," Just wanted to say a huge thanks to all of you for the panel. It was a very powerful event for the students, some said it was the best thing they had participated in all year. I appreciate both your time and willingness to share such powerful and difficult aspects of your experiences in war. Hope to have you back again soon."

Veterans For Peace Chapter

CHAPTER 127 - MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Ward Brennan

127 is organized to give homeless veterans who frequent Peacehouse in Minneapolis Minnesota an opportunity to input into Veterans For Peace their experiences and thoughts. We have been meetings the first Saturday of each month and invite veterans who have an interest in homeless issues and particularly veterans who use Peacehouse to attend. Our meetings are poorly attended but each person in attendance is given amply opportunity for participation.

Our first President of Chapter 127 was Bob Heberle who with his wife Jeanne volunteered at Peacehouse and was honored by Veterans For Peace at our 2013 National Convention with the award of a medal for the contributions he has made to Veterans For Peace. Bob died in September and Bob`s funeral bequest was for memorials to Veterans For Peace. National VFP, Chapter 27 and 127 were recipients of these bequests from Bob`s many friends, who remembered his contributions of money and actions to promote peace.

CHAPTER 132 - CORVALLIS, OR

Bart Bolger

For such a small community, Corvallis has a remarkable number of peace and justice and other progressive groups. How does VFP Linus Pauling Chapter stand out? We are the "go-to" group for well-organized peace events, such as hosting prominent speakers (David

Barsamian, Rich Forer, Moji Agha). We also draw a good crowd when hosting a film or forum, such as the one we held to view the Brave New Films documentary, *Living Under Drones*.

One of our favorite events lately was to host two other Oregon VFP chapters (156-Rogue Valley and 159-Lane Co.) for a tour of the Ava Helen and Linus Pauling Archives at Oregon State University. We were even able to hold Dr. Pauling's two Nobel Prizes. [One wonders if an opportunity to hold President Obama's Prize will be as coveted one day.]

Our chapter participated in the LiveStream event of the Howard Zinn "Read-In" which drew a good crowd and led to a lively discussion of Zinn's work.

We also hosted a presentation by a local member of the Vietnam Friendship Village Project, who showed a film and led a discussion about the Project. Many of our community members were unaware of the continued Agent Orange effects on the people of Vietnam.

Leah Bolger has been very busy giving drones presentations here and around the state and working on the Drones Quilt Project. For more on that Project see this link: http://goo.gl/I99ZT2.
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CHAPTER 133 - HELENA, MT

Danny Showalter

Veterans For Peace Chapter 133 has a name. We have been working to set up our charter and elect officers. Patrick Vaughan, Dave Herries, Allen Walters, David Martin, Mac Palmer, Danny Showalter, Robert Foster, Aden Dohn, John Snively John Garrity, and Joyce Cummings can be credited with rechartering the chapter.

On Veterans Day/Armistice Day last year we had a gathering at the Vietnam and Korean War Memorials in Rose Park, Missoula. We had roughly 30 people attend. We offered prayers for those have fallen or served while performing their duties. We rang a bell 11 times in honor of the armistice that ended World War I on the 11th hour of the 11th day in 1918.

We have members from several towns in the western Montana area. At present we have members from Missoula, Hamilton, Butte, Clinton, and Deer Lodge.

We are still very much a work in progress but that is probable true for most VFP chapters. We are presently working on goals for 2014 and adopting bylaws.

CHAPTER 134 - TACOMA, WA

Ramon Nacanaynay

The Armistice Day March was a success as we took our message of peace and nonviolence to people who are at different stages of their conversion. This was followed by our support of Coffee Strong's 5th Anniversary and Silent Auction at the Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center in Seattle. This happened on Nov. 10th. Guests included former CIA Analyst, Ray McGovern and Philip Chi. I still serve as a board member for Coffee Strong which provides G.I. Rights counseling and Veterans Benefits counseling. Coffee Strong's website www.coffeestrong.org.

We planned the VFP Regional Conference on February 8th in Tacoma. Guests included VFP President Patrick McCann and Interim Executive Director Michael McPhearson. Conference attendees are encouraged to attend a speakers event *Does Privacy Matter? Surveillance, Secrecy and the NSA* at the Washington State History Museum from 7:30 PM. This event is sponsored by United For Peace of Pierce County and features Thomas Drake and Jesselyn Radack. More information at our website: www.vfptacoma.com

In December we tabled at Tacoma's Dicken's Festival. On January 19th we tabled at the Martin Luther King Jr. event at Tacoma's Urban Grace. Charley Dils continues to distribute the War Crimes Times. David Dittemore continues with the vigils and the PTSD support group. Stephen and Kristi Nebel have also been providing technical skills and events coordination.

In the works, is the possibility of bringing the traveling display Arlington Northwest to the Washington State History Museum.

CHAPTER 156 - ROGUE VALLEY, OR

Jim Woods

On Oct 2nd we participated in a stand-down at the White City, Oregon VA facility. This stand-down assisted hundreds of homeless veterans.

On October 10-11 we participated in the 50th anniversary of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Linus Pauling. Dr. Pauling was a faculty member and researcher at Oregon State University and was heavily involved in nuclear test ban treaties. While in Corvallis we also met with the Corvallis VFP chapter 132.

On October 29th VFP 156 co-sponsored a talk by Elliott Adams on his tour of the west coast discussing the plight of prisoners still held in Guantanamo.

On Armistice Day we encouraged community churches to ring bells in remembrance of all who died in wartime, especially civilians and children. One veteran spoke to his church congregation, acknowledged veterans present and read a short piece from Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions*.

On January 11th, we protested the continued operation of Guantanamo Prison with a street theater focused on the eight detainees who died at the prison under questionable circumstances. The detainees were marched in wearing handcuffs and chained together. A history of

operations at Guantanamo was read. On cue, the detainees shouted in turn, "My name is Ali Mohammed and I died for justice!" The jailer read a short bio of each prisoner mentioning their age, country of origin, and weight on the day they died. It was touching and powerful - even the jailer showed emotion as he read the stories.



Chapter 157 - NC Triangle

John Heuer

In December we co-sponsored appearances of young Israeli peace activists, Anarchists Against the Wall at the Islamic Center of Raleigh. Co-sponsors included Black Workers for Justice and NC Peace Action.

In January we held our 2nd chapter meeting hosted by the Next Level Veterans Outreach Campus in Durham. Next Level provides a variety of services to veterans, and has invited us to make our home with them at the Hayti Heritage Center. Also in January we coordinated the 1st Close Guantanamo billboard installation in Johnston County (see photo) and participated in the formation of the Carolina Soul Repair Coalition, planning our first Soul Repair Conference in Raleigh, March 6 and 7. Recommended reading: *Soul Repair: Healing Moral Injury After War.*

On January 16 we were part of a delegation led by Ray McGovern to the office of NC Senator Richard Burr in Winston-Salem to call for the release of the Senate Intelligence Committee Report on CIA Interrogation (torture). Sen Burr is a member of the committee, and has opposed releasing the report to the public. Members of our delegation included representatives of the NC Council of Churches, NC Stop Torture Now and Quaker House.

Associate member Howie Machtinger continues his leadership in Full Disclosure: Toward and Honest Commemoration of the American War in Viet Nam. (See ncveteransforpeace.org/memorial).

Plans are shaping up for WW II veteran Sam Winstead's 3rd annual Ride for Peace, bicycling from Raleigh to DC April 27—May 3rd.

Chapter 160 - Viet Nam

Suel Jones

In December VFP Chapter 160 received its official "Certificate of Registration" from the Viet Nam government to operate legally as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Viet Nam, supporting humanitarian programs dealing with the legacy of war including Agent Orange and unexploded ordnance. Chapter 160 works closely with the Veterans Association of Viet Nam and hosts an annual two-week Agent Orange and unexploded ordinance informational tour of Vietnam

Chapter 160 with more than 30 veterans and associate members, is now the only American veterans organization with a permanent presence in Vietnam. Resident members are based in Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, Hoi An, Nha Tranh, Ho Chi Minh City, and Pleiku.

The chapter is now finalizing arrangements for the Spring Tour this coming April. The tour focuses on present-day problems associated with Agent Orange and unexploded ordinance. This is the third annual tour, so stay tuned for information concerning this year's tour and scheduling for next year's tour.

Chapter 161 - Iowa City, IA

John Jadryev

The efforts of the chapter since fall can best be characterized as "cooperative". Our partnership with Chapter169 in Cedar Rapids resulted in former army captain and Guantanamo chaplain James Yee coming to Iowa. During the time he was here we partnered with the University of Iowa Center for Human Rights, the Iowa City Mosque, Prairie Lights Books, and the Unitarian Universalist Society. The collaboration resulted in two speaking engagements, a book reading, and his standing with us at our fourth annual Nov 11 Armistice Day observance and social afterwards. It was the only one in the state of Iowa and attracted veterans from over 100 miles away.

Other activities: On Oct 7th, Afghan War vigil mourning the start of the 13th year of war; initiated our resource library and elected veteran member Joe Michaud, author and poet to be the Chapter's official librarian; participated on December 10th, International Human Rights day in public reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; showed the movies *Unmanned: America's Drone War*; and *Dirty Wars*; co-sponsored a fund-raiser for Syrian refugees, with proceeds to UNICEF.

The chapter will join the initiative of the Des Moines Chapter and the Des Moines, Iowa Catholic Worker in a Mar 15th action/rally at the 132nd Iowa Air National Guard base. This fighter wing is being converted to a mission of armed drone warfare. The rally will feature Kathy Kelly, Elliott Adams, and Daniel Hale.

Taps: Chapter 161 charter member Don Wiederanders died at his home in Cedar Falls, Iowa on Jan 19th. He was 88.



CHAPTER 168 - LOUISVILLE, KY

Carol Rawert Trainer

On November 11 Chapter 168 participated in the Louisville Veterans Parade in downtown Louisville, a 1.5 mile march, wearing our Veterans For Peace vests and carrying the VFP Flag. Since this was the first year we participated we were not sure of what our reception would be but we were a bit surprised by the warm reception from the other veteran organizations and many of the thousands of spectators.

John Wilborn, Chapter Treasurer and Viet Nam Veteran spoke to the Louisville School Board in opposition to their plan to make a Louisville middle school a Junior ROTC magnet school. Their plan is on hold at this time.

On November 10 the Louisville Courier Journal published Harold and Carol Trainer's letter to the editor regarding military cuts. To paraphrase the letter: As another Veterans' Day passes our veterans are honored for their service. However, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel is considering significant compensation changes for military personnel. This is beyond hardware options of cutting weapons systems. The president said that while military compensation and retirement should provide a reasonable standard of living, they should be fiscally sustainable and impose the least burden on the American taxpayer. We need to honor our veterans by ensuring that we really support them. This may take some real sacrifice on our parts, like maybe more tax revenue or budget changes.

Carol Trainer had a Haiku published in the annual Courier Journal Holiday Haiku contest. "On the street for years, protesting immoral wars. When will peace be known?"

CHAPTER 172 - PRESCOTT, AZ

Dennis Duvall

On Aug 27, our Chapter celebrated a *Day of Peace* when VFP and Grandmothers for Peace persuaded the Prescott City Council to issue a peace proclamation recognizing the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact of 1928 banning war as a way of settling conflict.

In the Nov 11 Veterans Day parade our Chapter was joined by two dozen community peace and justice activists saying NO to war and militarism in the world and in our community. We hosted Elliott Adams' *Close Guantanamo* speaking tour on Nov 26, Elliott's Gitmo presentation leading to a lively discussion of war, torture and human rights.

On Nov 30, our chapter hosted the showing and discussion of Robert Greenwald's new film *Unmanned: America's Drone Wars*. The inaugural Martin Luther King Day march in Prescott on Jan 20 drew 300 marchers, with Veterans For Peace mentioned in the Prescott Daily Courier as one of the organizations joining in the march.



Memorial: Bob Heberle, teacher, peace activist, military veteran



Considering all the time Bob Heberle devoted to war protests, his four arrests for nonviolent civil disobedience didn't surprise those who were close to him.

Heberle, 79, died Sept. 6 after an 18-month battle against lung cancer. When friends and family gathered for his memorial service, they remembered when he deployed himself in a rubber raft on Lake Minnetonka to intrude on a political fundraiser attended by Vice President Dick Cheney. "That was his favorite arrest," said Jean Heberle, his wife of 55 years. "He loved his country, but he was antiwar and believed people all over the world are the same."

Heberle, worked for 34 years as a public high school teacher in Minneapolis before turning to peace activism in retirement. He taught language and social studies, but finished his career helping dropouts get diplomas.

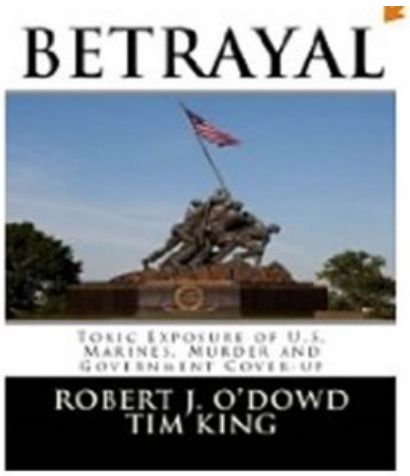
Outside the classroom, Heberle led union fights to raise teacher salaries and immersed himself in the historic desegregation of Hale and Field elementary schools in 1969 and 1970. "He was always fighting for the underdog," Jean Heberle said. Heberle's primary platform for denouncing warfare was Veterans for Peace. He served on the organization's national board of directors and was officially commended for longtime service shortly before he died.

"He was soft-spoken, but direct," said Larry Johnson, president of the Twin Cities VFP Chapter 27. "He was as disciplined as he was gutsy." Heberle, a recovering alcoholic, finished his life with 30 years of sobriety. He used careful research and his knowledge of the history of war crimes, for instance, to stoke outrage against U.S. torture tactics in the period after 9/11. Heberle also was behind a Veterans for Peace initiative that coordinates churches in more than 60 U.S. cities to ring bells every Armistice Day for world peace. "He believed the best way to honor war veterans is to work for peace," Johnson said.

Heberle is survived by his wife and their children Bob Jr. of Eagan; Mary Hamm of Spring Lake Park; Ruth Wolf of St. Anthony Village and Janet "Juana" Rudzki of Navarre Beach, FL; and six grandchildren.

Book Review

Betrayal: Toxic Exposure of U.S. Marines, Murder and Government Cover-up
By Robert O'Dowd and Tim King (Bonnie King Editor)
Published by O'Dowd and King LLC
Reviewed by Aaron Davis



Betrayal reports with precise, well-researched and written evidence of the denial of responsibility and cover-up of environmental contamination of Marines, civilians, their families and the public at El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, CA and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, NC.

This is personal to me because I was a Marine stationed at Camp Lejeune 1973-76, as was my WWII Marine father Walter C. Davis Jr. in 1943. My spouse Sandra and I lived in the Tarawa Terrace on base housing area. My first son Caleb was conceived and born there June 16, 1975. He now suffers from a sub-arachnoid hemorrhage (caused when a brain aneurism ruptures). My second son Jabin, was conceived there three months prior to our leaving the Marine Corps. Born in Provo, Utah December 5, 1976, Jabin was born with a ventricular septal (heart) defect. Their mother continues to suffer a host of health problems.

Jerry Ensminger's MSGT USMC (ret.) daughter Janey (who also lived in Tarawa Terrace) died at age 9 of acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Jerry's realization that Janey's death was caused by contaminated base drinking water led him on a 14-year journey of activism, lobbying, and challenging government agencies to take responsibility. In 2012, President Obama signed in to law HR 1627, providing VA health care for Camp Lejeune veterans and their families. No such legislation covers El Toro Marine veterans and their families.

Camp Lejeune Marine veterans continue to have their claims for compensation rejected at an 84% rate. Eighty-two that were stationed at Lejeune have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

I highly endorse Bob O'Dowd and Tim King's recommendation for the VA to adopt a Science Advisory Board to evaluate toxic exposures on all 130 military installations on the EPA Superfund Cleanup list.

By the way, *Betrayal* provides convincing evidence that the government not only covered up contamination on military bases, but the murder of Marine Colonel James Sabow and other Marines tied to the use of El Toro's assets in the 1980s and 1990s to import South American cocaine into the U.S. and export weapons to the Contra Rebels of Nicaragua.

Aaron M Davis is co-founder of VFP 118 in Salt Lake City, Utah and a former Marine and Army Officer.




Don't Forget — Check Out the VFP Store!!

veteransforpeace.org/store/ or call 314-725-6005






Close Guantanamo billboard in the Triangle area of North Carolina.

The Screaming Man Calls on Allah

There is a chair,
an ordinary chair.
A man in Arab clothes
is seated in the chair.
His legs are tied to the legs.
His arms are tied to the arms.
His chest is tied against the back.
A strap around his forehead
pulls his head back as far
as it can be pulled. The strap
is tied to the chair.

My computer screen caption says
that he has been tied for three hours
that he is not being tortured
that he is being punished.
That, between screams,
he calls on Allah.
His offense? We are not told.
How long will this go on?
MSNBC does not know.

Behind the chair is a half-wall.
Beyond, an open door with
desert heat and sun outside.
In that doorway stands another man:
combat boots, camouflage uniform,
large helmet, M16 held stiff in front;
a face no more than nineteen.

He has been ordered to guard
the screaming man. He has been
watching the screaming man
for the same three hours
of his screaming. Eyes wide,
he is following orders.

When they come to untie him,
the screaming man may never be able
to lift his head normally again – his
vertebrae are permanently damaged.
If he is released, he will hate,
and teach others to hate.
That, we do not need to be told.

One question remains, which
only the future will answer.
In the brain under that G.I. helmet,
in the mind behind those eyes
glittering in horror, what
is slouching, waiting to be born?

Marylou Streznewski

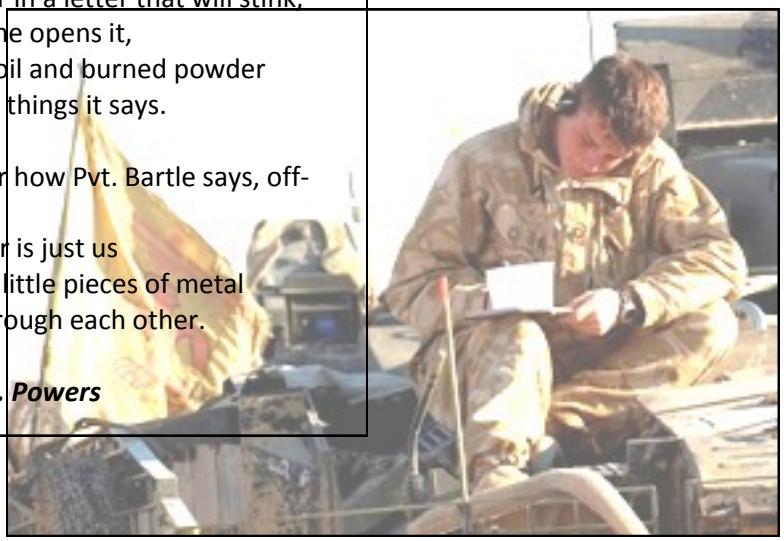
Letter Composed During a Lull in the Fighting

I tell her I love her like not killing
or ten minutes of sleep
beneath the low rooftop wall
on which my rifle rests.

I tell her in a letter that will stink,
when she opens it,
of bolt oil and burned powder
and the things it says.

I tell her how Pvt. Bartle says, off-hand,
that war is just us
making little pieces of metal
pass through each other.

Kevin C. Powers



Leave A Legacy

Consider including Veterans For Peace in your will.
A bequest is one of the simplest ways to support VFP.
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More information at veteransforpeace.org/take-action/vfp-bequest/

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